

## How to Host a Holiday Mocktail

The winter holiday season is finally upon us. While the holidays are a great time to enjoy get-togethers with friends and family, it is one of the most dangerous times of the year on the roadways because of the increased risk of driving under the influence (DUI). For the responsible employer, the winter holiday season is a great time to show your staff that you care about their safety both on and off the job. By hosting a Holiday Mocktail Party at your place of business, you can show your co-workers how to celebrate the holiday season safely.

### Preparation/ Materials Needed

Hosting a mocktail party only takes a little bit of planning for a tremendous benefit to your business and to your employees. Once you decide to host a mocktail, the first thing that you should do is contact the Delaware Office of Highway Safety's (OHS) Corporate Outreach Coordinator. The Corporate Outreach Coordinator will assist you in planning all aspects of the event.

- The first task will be to determine a date in late November or early December between the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays. For best results, pick a day of the week when staff attendance is high. It is recommended that you hold the event over a three-hour time frame during lunch for maximum exposure.
- Next, you will want to identify a high traffic location in which to hold the mocktail. The area in or around the company lunchroom or cafeteria is a great choice.
- Finally, identify who will staff the event. At least one representative from your business must be available for the duration of the mocktail, plus one to three additional staff members based on the number of attendees you expect.

Once you have determined a date, time, location and staffing, you can begin choosing the food and beverages that you will serve. The Corporate Outreach Coordinator will provide you with guidelines and recommended recipes for the non-alcoholic mocktail punch and the food you may serve.

- The mocktail beverage should be both tasty and attractive, an inviting alternative to drinking alcohol. You must pick a recipe from the Mocktail booklet provided by OHS.
- Choose foods that are protein and carbohydrate rich, because they slow the absorption of alcohol into the blood stream. The best choices are meats and cheeses, cookies and fruit. Avoid serving foods that encourage drinking like salty pretzels, chips, and peanuts.

## Procedure

Set aside plenty of time on the day of the mocktail party to set up. Encourage the event staff to dress with a festive theme in mind. Cookie-baking aprons over clothes, Santa hats, and bells are a fun way to catch the attention of your staff and visitors on their way to have lunch. If you are unable to dress up, at least consider decorating the table and area with holiday decorations around it so that your employees will be drawn to your area to see what is going on.

- When you are setting up, be sure to place the tables in a location near the entrance to the cafeteria or break area, but out of the way of the flow of traffic.
- One table should be designated for the food items and one table should be designated for information and give-a ways. Once the tables are set up, be sure that you have staff and supplies on hand to refill the refreshments through the entire mocktail.
- Finally, the event staff should be able to answer simple questions about the purpose of the mocktail party and alternatives to DUI. The Corporate Outreach Coordinator will provide all of the materials and information needed, and will be on hand to assist for the duration of the event.

Additional tips for success include promoting the event within your company.

- One suggestion is to hang posters around the lunch area a week before the event. Send an invitation via email to your associates a few days before and again on the day of the mocktail.
- Track of the number of people served for a measurable outcome.
- Take pictures to capture the event.
- And, don't forget to invite the public relations department of your company. They may wish to write an article about your event for the company newsletter and for the local paper.

## Conclusion

Holiday mocktails are simple to put together and can make a lasting impression on your co-workers. By making it festive, you will attract a large number of participants. By making it fun, you can convey the idea that partygoers don't need to drink alcohol to have a great time. By making it smart, you will show your associates how to avoid getting a DUI, not only during the summer, but throughout the year. Simply put, hosting a holiday mocktail party demonstrates to your co-workers that serving non-alcoholic beverages and smart party food during their winter holiday festivities is responsible, and with a little imagination, can be fun.